DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 245 864 RC 014 814

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TITLE Choosing a College: Influences on Chicano Freshmen at CSU Fresno.
PUB DATE Apr 83
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Western Social Science Association (Albuquerque, NM, April 27-30, 1983). The study was funded by a grant from the Affirmative Action Faculty Development Grant, California State University, Fresno.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Choice; *College Freshmen; Decision Making; Educational Finance; Higher Education; *Parent Influence; Questionnaires; *Significant Others; *Social Influences; *Student Financial Aid
IDENTIFIERS California State University Fresno; *Chicanos

ABSTRACT

A mailed questionnaire yielded data on the influence of social factors leading Chicano freshmen to enter California State University, Fresno (CSU-Fresno), as well as information on family background, academic preparation, and future plans, and compared data of Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) participants and non-participants. Responses from 119 students (68% female, 32% male; 60% EOP participants) entering CSU-Fresno in Fall 1981 indicated the top six influences were parents, high school counselors, EOP staff, siblings, Recruiting Students Via Parents (RSVP) staff, and high school teachers. While EOP and non-EOP freshmen shared the same sources of influence, the order of their importance differed somewhat, but not to a statistically significant degree. The majority of students graduated from high schools within CSU-Fresno's service area, did not live in dormitories, and were California born. Recommendations included making home visits an integral part of outreach activities; compiling lists of all siblings of currently enrolled Chicano students to be used in seeking potential applicants; inviting high school counselors for on-campus training and mutual consultation workshops; and examining the role of CSU-Fresno's Office of Relations, which is supposed to serve all students but ranked 14th on a scale from 1-16 in terms of influence regarding Chicano freshmen enrollment. (NEC)

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Choosing a College:

Influences on Chicano Freshmen at CSU Fresno

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RC014814

Paper presented at the annual meetings of the Western Social Science Association, Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 27-30, 1983. I wish to thank Dan McNeill, Robert Segura, Junious Williams, and Gloria Zuniga, for their assistance. Special thanks go to Jon Shaver and Nan van den Bergh for helping me with the data analysis. This study was made possible by a grant from the Affirmative Action Faculty Development Grant, California State University, Fresno.

Introduction

This report examines the social factors leading Chicano freshmen to enter California State University, Fresno. Several influences were posited and a questionnaire was developed and mailed out to Chicano freshmen entering in the Fall of 1981. Over half the respondents returned the questionnaire. Parental influence proved to be the most powerful indicator in the field. Policy recommendations will be discussed at the end of this report.

This study will be the first in a series analyzing the problems and prospects of minority students at CSU, Fresno. Reports 2 and 3 will build on the results presented here. Report 2 will use the same questionnaire (with slight modifications) to determine how Chicano freshmen entering Fresno State this fall compare with their peers of the past year. Report 3 will focus on the first year experience of the Chicano freshmen investigated in this report.

Method

Approximately 216 Chicano freshmen entered CSU, Fresno in the Fall, 1981. Female Chicanos constituted 62% (133) of this population, whereas male Chicanos represented 38% (83). The percentage of Chicana freshmen is higher than that of female freshmen in general, who comprised 55.6% of the freshmen class for Fall, 1981 (CSUF Student Data Book, 1982: 4). A 58%

majority (126) of Chicano freshmen were students of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP).

A questionnaire (see Appendix A) was developed, consisting of six parts. The first five deal with the following influences: family, friends, high school staff, Fresno State staff and others.* Students were asked to respond to statements under each heading, using the following scale: 5=strongly agree; 4=agree; 3=don't know/unsure; 2=disagree; and 1=strongly disagree. The last portion of this questionnaire asked students to provide information about their family background, academic preparation, and future plans.

On February 27, 1982, 216 questionnaires were mailed out, each with a self-addressed stamped envelope. After three weeks, 81 questionnaires--about 37%--had been returned. To increase the response rate, a second questionnaire was mailed out, also with a self-addressed stamped envelope. The second appeal netted 38 more responses, for a total of 119. This new figure represented a total return rate of 55%.

The sex breakdown of Chicano respondents closely resembles that of the original population. 68% of the respondents (81) are female and 32% are male (38). Also, the respondents' EOP/non-EOP status roughly corresponds to that of the original population. 60% (72) are EOP students and 40% (47) are non-EOP students. Chicanas constituted 79.2% (57) of all EOP students, Chicanos 20.8% (15). For non-EOP Chicano freshmen, the sex

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*The "other" portion of the questionnaire was deleted from the analysis because it deals with impersonal rather than personal sources of influence.

breakdown is fairly even. Males constitute 48.9% (23), whereas 51.1% (24) are females.

Sources of Influence

Table 1 indicates the overall ratings of sources of influence by Chicano respondents.

Table 1
Sources of Influence for Chicano Freshmen

Sources of Influence	Strongly Agree % of & Agree	Average Rank Score	Category Rank	Overall Rank
Family		7.8		
Parents	63.1		1	1
Siblings	43.7		2	4
Other Relative	31.1		3	7.5
Relative at CSUF	20.2		4	11.5
Relative - CSUF Alumni	12.6		5	15
Friends		9.3		
Close Friend	29.4		2	9
Peers Planned CSUF	26.8		3	10
Friends at CSUF	31.1		1	7.5
CSUF Alumni Friends	16.0		4	13
School		8.0		
Teacher	38.6		2	6
Counselor	47.9		1	2
Administrator	10.1		3	16
Staff		8.38		
CSUF - ORS	14.3		4	14
EOP	45.3		1	3
RSVP	38.7		2	5
CSUF Ad.	20.2		3	11.5

The top six influences reported by the freshmen are:

1. Parents
2. High School Counselors
3. EOP staff
4. Siblings
5. RSVP staff
6. High School Teacher

Hence, family, high school personnel, and selected Fresno State Staff, are all important influences in helping Chicano freshmen decide to attend Fresno State. This finding is supported by other research in higher education.

Table 2 breaks down the sources of influence by EOP and non-EOP status.

TABLE 2
Sources of Influences for Chicano Freshmen
by EOP and non-EOP Status

Sources of Influence	% of strongly Agree & Agree		Average Rank Score		Category Rank		Overall Rank	
	EOP	N-EOP	EOP	NEOP	EOP	NEOP	EOP	NEOP
Family			7.2	8.0				
Parents	63.9	61.7			1	1	1	1
Siblings	51.4	36.2			2	2	4	2
Other Relative	44.1	14.9			3	4	7	13
Relatives at CSUF	24.6	17.0			4	3	11	11
Relative - CSUF Alumni	21.5	2.1			5	5	13	16
Friends			10.2	9.5				
Close Friend	33.3	26.0			3	1	10	6
Peers Planned CSUF	34.7	17.3			2	2	9	10
Friends at CSUF	43.4	15.2			1	3	8	12
CSUF Alumni Friends	21.3	10.6			4	4	14	14
School			7.6	7.3				
Teacher	50.0	26.1			2	2	5	5
Counselor	58.5	34.0			1	1	3	3
Administrator	16.7	2.2			3	3	15	15
CSUF Staff			9.0	7.0				
CSUF - ORS	15.2	17.4			4	3.5	16	8.5
EOP	63.4	19.6			1	2	2	7
RSVP	44.9	31.9			2	1	6	4
CSUF Ad.	23.1	17.4			3	3.5	12	8.5

As Table 2 shows, the top five sources of influence are:

EOP STUDENTS	NON-EOP STUDENTS
1. Parents	1. Parents
2. EOP Staff	2. Siblings
3. High School Counselors	3. High School Counselor
4. Siblings	4. RSVP Staff
5. High School Teacher	5. High School Teacher

Generally speaking, EOP and non-EOP Chicano freshmen share the same sources of influence, though the order of their importance differs somewhat. (These differences are not statistically significant [conversation with Jon Shaver].) The Chicano freshmen overall agreed that their parents or guardians play the most important role in influencing their decisions to attend college. But an important factor separating EOP from non-EOP students are non-family influences. EOP students tended to rank EOP staff and selected high school personnel nearly as highly as their family. Non-EOP students, in contrast, ranked their parents and siblings as top sources of influence while high school personnel and CSUF staff were viewed as less significant sources of influence. This difference can be partly explained by the fact that most EOP students are admitted through special action and thus depend upon the advise of non-family members.

Background of Chicano Freshmen

Although EOP and non-EOP students are alike in many respects, they do differ in certain areas. Appendixes B through L highlight their academic preparation, family backgrounds, and degree aspirations.

Appendix B shows that the majority of EOP and non-EOP students graduate from high schools within Fresno State's service area. It is unfortunate to see that many of the high schools only send a few students. Appendixes C and D show that they do not generally live in the dorms. This fact may reduce

retention, given the research by Astin and others. Also, the majority of students are born in California (see Appendix E), which suggests a stable population. The next appendixes show some of their differences. Appendix F indicates that many more EOP than non-EOP students receive financial aid. This finding was predictable, since most EOP students admitted receive monies from the financial aids office. Appendixes G and H show the number and percentage of Chicano freshmen working. Most EOP students don't work, whereas most non-EOP students do. Appendix I demonstrates that a majority of EOP students come from families whose income is below $10,000. Non-EOP students come from families with higher incomes. Further, EOP students generally have mothers and fathers with lower educational levels than non-EOP students (see Appendixes J and K). At the same time, however, EOP students generally have higher degree aspirations than their non-EOP counterparts (see Appendix L). Further research is needed to see if their strong determination to succeed is carried on to their second and third years. The reported grade point average (GPA) of Chicano freshmen is displayed in Appendix M. The great majority of students reported grades of C or better. What is disturbing is that 15 EOP students (20.8%) reported GPA's of F in their first semester.

Implications and Policy Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed in light of the results of this survey:

1. Home visits should be an integral part of the outreach activities for both the EOP program and SAA/Outreach (formerly RSVP). Most outreach activities conducted by these programs involve visitation to local high schools in CSU Fresno's service area. The results of this survey suggest this approach might profitably be expanded. Since family plays the single most

important role in college choice by Chicanos, it seems that these programs could benefit by concrete plans to visit with students in their home.

2. EOP and SAA/Outreach staff should compile a list of all brothers and sisters of currently enrolled Chicano students. The staff could ask new students to provide this information on application forms at the time of enrollment. A card catalogue could thus be formed and updated. Since this survey indicates that siblings have a powerful effect on both EOP and non-EOP students, outreach workers could use the catalogue to seek potential applicants.

3. High school counselors should be invited for on-campus training and mutual consultation workshops. An agenda item for such meetings may be one of the results of this survey.

4. University officials should examine the role of CSU Fresno's Office of Relations with Schools. Table 1 suggests that this Office is near the bottom in terms of influence regarding Chicano freshmen enrollment. It is ranked 14th on a scale of 1 to 16. Though this Office is supposed to serve all students, it is obviously missing Chicanos. Furthermore, it is clearly unfair to place the burden of minority admission solely on the backs of EOP and SAA/Outreach.

Appendix A
CHICANO FRESHMEN SURVEY

Instructions: Please read each of the following statements. After doing so, indicate your reactions about the statements by using the following scale: (Mark your choice in the space to the left of the statement.)

5=Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Don't know/Unsure 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

FAMILY

____1. My father/mother/guardian encouraged me to go to Fresno State.
____2. My brother/sister encouraged me to go to Fresno State.
____3. Another relative encouraged me to attend Fresno State.
____4. A relative (parent, sibling, uncle/cousin) who is presently attending Fresno State encouraged me to attend Fresno State.
____5. A relative (parent, sibling, uncle/cousin) who is an alumnus of Fresno State encouraged me to attend Fresno State.

FRIENDS

____6. A close friend from high school wanted me to go to Fresno State.
____7. My group of friends were planning on attending Fresno State.
____8. A friend who is presently attending Fresno State encouraged me to attend Fresno State.
____9. A friend who is an alumnus of Fresno State encouraged me to attend Fresno State.

SCHOOL

____10. A high school teacher wanted me to go to Fresno State.
____11. A high school counselor encouraged me to go to Fresno State.
____12. A high school administrator (principal, etc.,) wanted me to go to Fresno State.

FRESNO STATE STAFF

____13. Staff from the School Relations/Admissions Office encouraged me to attend Fresno State.
____14. Staff from Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) wanted me to attend Fresno State.
____15. Staff from Recruiting Students Via Parents (RSVP) wanted me to attend Fresno State.
____16. I saw an advertisement that encouraged me to go to Fresno State.

OTHER

____17. Nobody encouraged me to go to Fresno State. I just decided on my own to come here.
____18. Fresno State was the only college I applied to.
____19. Fresno State was one of the colleges I applied to.
____20. Fresno State was closest to home, and I wanted to be close to home.
____21. Fresno State permitted me to live away from home.
____22. Fresno State permitted me to live at home.

PLEASE TURN THE PAGE TO COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions about yourself. Your answers will be helpful when comparing them with others who answered this survey. Answer each question as carefully as possible.

23. Please indicate which category best describes your age.
_____under 21 _____26-30 _____age 40 plus
_____22-25 _____31-40

24. Are you _____male or _____female.

25. What high school did you graduate from and where is it located?
High School:_____City:_____

26. Where were you born?
City:_____State:_____Country:_____

27. Are you presently receiving financial aid? Yes_____ No_____

28. Are you presently working? Yes_____ No_____. If yes, mark the appropriate item.
_____ less than 5 hours per week _____21-30 hours per week
_____ 6-10 hours per week _____31-40 hours per week
_____ 11-20 hours per week _____more than 40 hours per week

29. Are you living in the dorms? Yes_____ No_____.

30. Are you living off campus? Yes_____ No_____. If yes, indicate where by marking the appropriate box.
_____with Parents/Guardian _____with Relatives
_____with Friends/Roommates _____By Myself

31. Which category best describes your family's current yearly income?
_____under $5,000 _____$15,001 to $20,000
_____$5,001 to $10,000 _____above $20,001
_____$10,001 to $15,000

32. Which best describes your mother/female guardian's highest educational attainment?
_____8th grade or less _____community college graduate
_____less than high school graduate _____4-year undergraduate degree
_____high school graduate _____graduate school

33. Which best describes your father/male guardian's highest educational attainment?
_____8th grade or less _____community college graduate
_____less than high school graduate _____4-year undergraduate degree
_____high school graduate _____graduate school

34. What was your High School grade point average:_____.

35. What was your 1st semester grade point average at Fresno State:_____.

36. How many colleges/universities not including Fresno State did you apply to before coming to Fresno State:_____.

37. What degree do you ultimately hope to earn?
_____Bachelor's _____Law Degree
_____Master's _____Medical Degree
_____Ph.D/Ed.d _____Other Professional Degree

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix B
High Schools of Chicano Freshmen
by EOP/non-EOP Status

HIGH SCHOOL	EOP #	EOP %	NON-EOP #	NON-EOP %	SUB-TOTAL #	SUB-TOTAL %
Roosevelt	10	(14.1)	4	(8.5)	14	(11.9)
Sanger	7	(9.9)	2	(4.3)	9	(7.6)
Madera	4	(5.6)	4	(8.5)	8	(6.8)
Clovis	1	(1.4)	6	(12.8)	7	(5.9)
McLane	2	(2.8)	3	(6.4)	5	(4.2)
Reedley	2	(2.8)	3	(6.4)	5	(4.2)
Central Union	3	(4.2)	1	(2.1)	4	(3.4)
Selma	2	(2.8)	2	(4.3)	4	(3.4)
Tranquility	3	(4.2)	1	(2.1)	4	(3.4)
Washington Union	4	(5.6)	0		4	(3.4)
Corcoran	2	(2.8)	2	(4.3)	4	(3.4)
King City	3	(4.2)	1	(2.1)	4	(3.4)
Firebaugh	1	(1.4)	2	(4.3)	3	(2.5)
Bullard	1	(1.4)	2	(4.3)	3	(2.5)
Fresno	2	(2.8)	1	(2.1)	3	(2.5)
Hoover	1	(1.4)	2	(4.3)	3	(2.5)
Delano	3	(4.2)	0		3	(2.5)
Dinuba	2	(2.8)	1	(2.1)	3	(2.5)
Clovis West	1	(1.4)	1	(2.1)	2	(1.7)
Le Grand	1	(1.4)	1	(2.1)	2	(1.7)
Yosemite	2	(2.8)	0		2	(1.7)
Monache	2	(2.8)	0		2	(1.7)
Monte Vista	0		1	(2.1)	1	(.8)
Fowler	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Fresno Adult School	0		1	(2.1)	1	(.8)
Kingsburg	0		1	(2.1)	1	(.8)
Laton	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Parlier	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Riverdale	0		1	(2.1)	1	(.8)
San Joaquin Memorial	0		1	(2.1)	1	(.8)
Boran	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Burroughs	0		1	(2.1)	1	(.8)
Hanford	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
B. Franklin (L.A.)	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Arroyo Grande	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Hollister	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Santa Maria	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Exeter	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Orosi	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
Redwood	1	(1.4)	0		1	(.8)
No Response	0		2	(4.3)	2	(1.7)
TOTAL	71	(100.0)	47	(100.0)	118	(100.0)*

* One missing case - the computer rounds off percentages

Appendix C
Housing for Chicano Freshmen

	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
Living in CSUF Dorms	19 (26.4)	9 (19.1)	28 (23.5)
Not Living in Dorms	53 (73.6)	38 (80.9)	91 (76.5)
TOTALS	72 (100.0)	47 (100.0)	119 (100.0)

Appendix D
Off-Campus Housing for Chicano Freshmen

	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
Living W/Parents	27 (51.9)	28 (73.6)	55 (61.2)
Living W/Friends	18 (34.6)	4 (10.6)	22 (24.4)
Living W/Relatives	5 (9.7)	3 (7.9)	8 (8.8)
Living Alone	2 (3.8)	3 (7.9)	5 (5.6)
TOTALS	52 (100.0)	38 (100.0)	90* (100.0)

* One case missing

Appendix E
State of Birth for Chicano Freshmen
by EOP/non-EOP

	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
California	53 (73.6)	28 (59.6)	81 (68.1)
Texas	8 (11.1)	5 (10.6)	13 (10.9)
Washington	2 (2.8)	1 (2.1)	3 (2.5)
Arizona	0 (0.0)	2 (4.3)	2 (1.7)
Colorado	0 (0.0)	2 (4.3)	2 (1.7)
Nevada	0 (0.0)	1 (2.1)	1 (.8)
Oregon	1 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	1 (.8)
Illinois	0 (0.0)	1 (2.1)	1 (.8)
Mexico	8 (11.1)	6 (12.8)	14 (11.8)
Other Foreign	0 (0.0)	1 (2.1)	1 (.8)
TOTALS	72 (100.0)	47 (100.0)	119 (100.0)

Appendix F
Chicano Freshmen Receiving Financial Aid
by EOP/non-EOP

	EOP STUDENT	NON EOP	TOTALS
Receiving Aid	67 (94.4)	26 (56.5)	93 (79.5)
Not Receiving Aid	4 (5.6)	20 (43.5)	24 (20.5)
TOTALS	71 (100.0)	46 (100.0)	117* (100.0)

*2 missing respondents

Appendix G
Employment of Chicano Freshmen
by EOP/NON-EOP

	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
Presently Working	31 (43.1)	26 (56.5)	57 (48.3)
Not Working	41 (56.9)	20 (43.5)	61 (51.7)
TOTALS	72 (100.0)	46 (100.0)	118* (100.0)

*1 missing case

Appendix H
Hours Worked Per Week By
Chicano Freshmen by EOP/non-EOP

	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
Less than 5 hrs. Weekly	2 (6.4)	3 (11.5)	5 (8.7)
6 to 10 hrs.	12 (38.7)	5 (19.2)	17 (29.8)
11 to 20 hrs.	15 (48.3)	11 (42.4)	26 (45.7)
21 to 30 hrs.	1 (3.3)	7 (26.9)	8 (14.0)
31 to 40 hrs.	1 (3.3)	0	1 (1.8)
TOTALS	31 (100.0)	26 (100.0)	57 (100.0)

Appendix I
Family Income of Chicano Freshmen
by EOP/non-EOP

Fall, 1981

	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
Under $5,000	10 (14.1)	3 (6.5)	13 (11.1)
$5,001 to $10,000	31 (43.7)	12 (26.1)	43 (36.8)
$10,001 to $15,000	15 (21.1)	5 (10.9)	20 (17.1)
$15,001 to $20,000	14 (19.7)	11 (23.9)	25 (21.4)
More than $20,001	1 (1.4)	15 (32.6)	16 (13.7)
TOTALS	71 (100.0)	46 (100.0)	117* (100.0)

* 2 missing cases

Appendix J
Mother's/Female Guardian's Education
of Chicano Freshmen by
by EOP/non-EOP

	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
8th Grade or Less	39 (54.9)	16 (34.8)	55 (47.0)
Less than H.S. Graduate	14 (19.7)	8 (17.4)	22 (18.8)
High School Graduate	14 (19.7)	16 (34.8)	30 (25.6)
Community College Graduate	2 (2.8)	3 (6.5)	5 (4.3)
Four-year College Graduate	0 (0.0)	3 (6.5)	3 (2.6)
Graduate Work	2 (2.8)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.7)
TOTALS	71 (100.0)	46 (100.0)	117* (100.0)

* Two missing cases

Appendix K
Father's/Male Guardian's Education
of Chicano Freshmen by
EOP/non-EOP

	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
8th Grade or Less	41 (61.2)	19 (41.3)	60 (53.1)
Less than H.S. Graduate	10 (14.9)	7 (15.2)	17 (15.0)
High School Graduate	9 (13.4)	7 (15.2)	16 (14.2)
Community College Graduate	6 (9.0)	5 (10.9)	11 (9.7)
Four-Year College Graduate	1 (1.5)	4 (8.7)	5 (4.4)
Graduate Work	0 (0.0)	4 (8.7)	4 (3.5)
TOTALS	67 (100.0)	46 (100.0)	113* (100.0)

* 7 missing cases

Appendix L
Degree Aspirations of Chicano Freshmen
by EOP/non-EOP

	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
Baccalaureate	32 (45.1)	20 (42.6)	52 (44.1)
Master's	20 (28.2)	17 (36.2)	37 (31.4)
PhD or EdD.	5 (7.0)	4 (8.5)	9 (7.6)
J.D.	8 (11.3)	1 (2.1)	9 (7.6)
M.D.	6 (8.5)	3 (6.4)	9 (7.6)
Other Professional Degree	0 (0.0)	2 (4.3)	2 (1.7)
TOTALS	71 (100.0)	47 (100.0)	118* (100.0)

*One missing case

Appendix M
First Semester G.P.A. of Chicano Freshmen
by EOP/non-EOP

GPA	EOP STUDENT	NON-EOP STUDENT	TOTALS
A	5 (6.9)	5 (10.6)	10 (8.4)
B	20 (27.8)	11 (23.4)	31 (26.1)
C	26 (36.1)	25 (53.2)	51 (42.9)
D	6 (8.3)	2 (4.3)	8 (6.7)
F	15 (20.8)	4 (8.5)	19 (16.0)
TOTALS	72 (100.0)	47 (100.0)	119 (100.0)

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